

NOV 1998

A S I E A E A S T

The International Animated Film Society

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November Screening
Between Background and Character
Presented by: Anne Bobroff-Hajal
School of Visual Arts
Amphitheater
209 East 23rd Street
Friday Nov. 20th @ 6:30pm
Kathy Rose and Pooh Kaye will discuss their
creative process and methods following the screening.



A Letter From The President: Linda Simensky

Greetings from the South.

One month ago, as I wrote this column, I was preparing to head off to Ottawa for the festival. My secret plan early on in my career was to find a job that required that I go to lots of film festivals. My current job is not exactly that job, but I still have figured out a way to go to a lot of film festivals these days. **JUST GET ON THE JURY!**

Ottawa.....

As I've mentioned, one of the stranger parts of the festival this year was the inconvenient timing, as the festival overlapped with Yom Kippur. In actuality, this impacted probably no more than a dozen people, but we were all pretty grumpy about it. At the family Yom Kippur dinner I had to keep explaining to my cousins things like, "I said 'Ottawa,' not 'Iowa,' it's in Canada," and "no it's not 'festival' as in party, it's festival as in film festival." I could tell they had no idea what I was talking about. And since they don't get Cartoon Network in that part of New Jersey, they still think I work for CNN. Anyway, Ottawa was two days over by the time I got there. I guess the most interesting aspect of this particular Ottawa festival was that **the films were more abstract, more experimental**, more Estonian, and in many ways were less accessible than usual. I enjoyed many of the films this year, but I only understood about half of them. The selection committee this year specifically went in this direction, and the jury this year was even more drawn to the surreal. The grand prize winner, Priit Parn's "Night of the Carrot," in particular, was surreal, since, as you all know from last month's screening, "Estonian" and "surreal" are practically synonymous. I thought moments of it were funny or interesting, but I have to admit I really didn't understand the greater message of the film. Igor Kovalyov was on the jury, with me and his films are fairly similar to Estonian films. He said he understood "Night of the Carrot" completely. So maybe it's a cultural difference. At least that's what I am hoping, or I'll be taking a course in Remedial Surrealism before the next festival. Here's my little secret: if you think of "Night of the Carrots" as 30 one-minute films, you'll at least understand some of them.

The festival itself was fun, although not much different than Ottawa festivals of the past. I did notice there were more Canadians than usual, especially students. And there were not as many companies there, particularly not as many big American companies recruiting. That was fine with me, since I have always felt that despite the fact that half the people are there to meet people and find jobs, recruiting sucks the energy out of festivals. On a personal note, when I'm standing around at festivals and see recruiters out of the corner of my eye, working the crowd, it only reminds me that they're working and I'm just standing around (not working.)

Don't tell my boss.

Linda cont.

Good news on the Karl Cohen front: he is doing much better! And, amazingly, back to editing the ASIFA-SF newsletter. What a guy! See you next month.



To
Contact

President

Linda Simensky:

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Fax: (404) 885-2456

Write: Linda Simensky

V.P. of Original Animation

Cartoon Network

1050 Techwood Drive NW

Atlanta, GA 30318

e-mail Linda.simensky@turner.com

Webmaster: Michael Dougherty

ASIFA East website renovation

Suggestions are indeed welcome.

If you'd like to be listed in a planned directory of East coast animators and studios, or if you have any artwork, quicktime clips, GIF animation, or other nifty goodies you'd like to contribute, please contact

Michael Dougherty

via Email at testanimal@aol.com

or call 212.654.6476

ASIFA EAST

The International Animated Film Society Northeast /New York Chapter
A Program of the New York Foundation For The Arts

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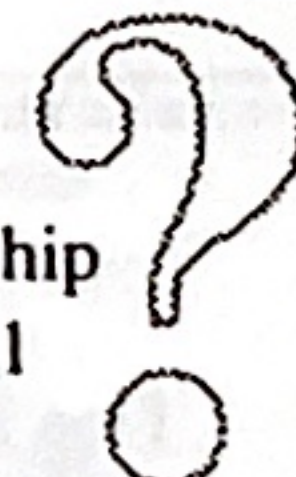
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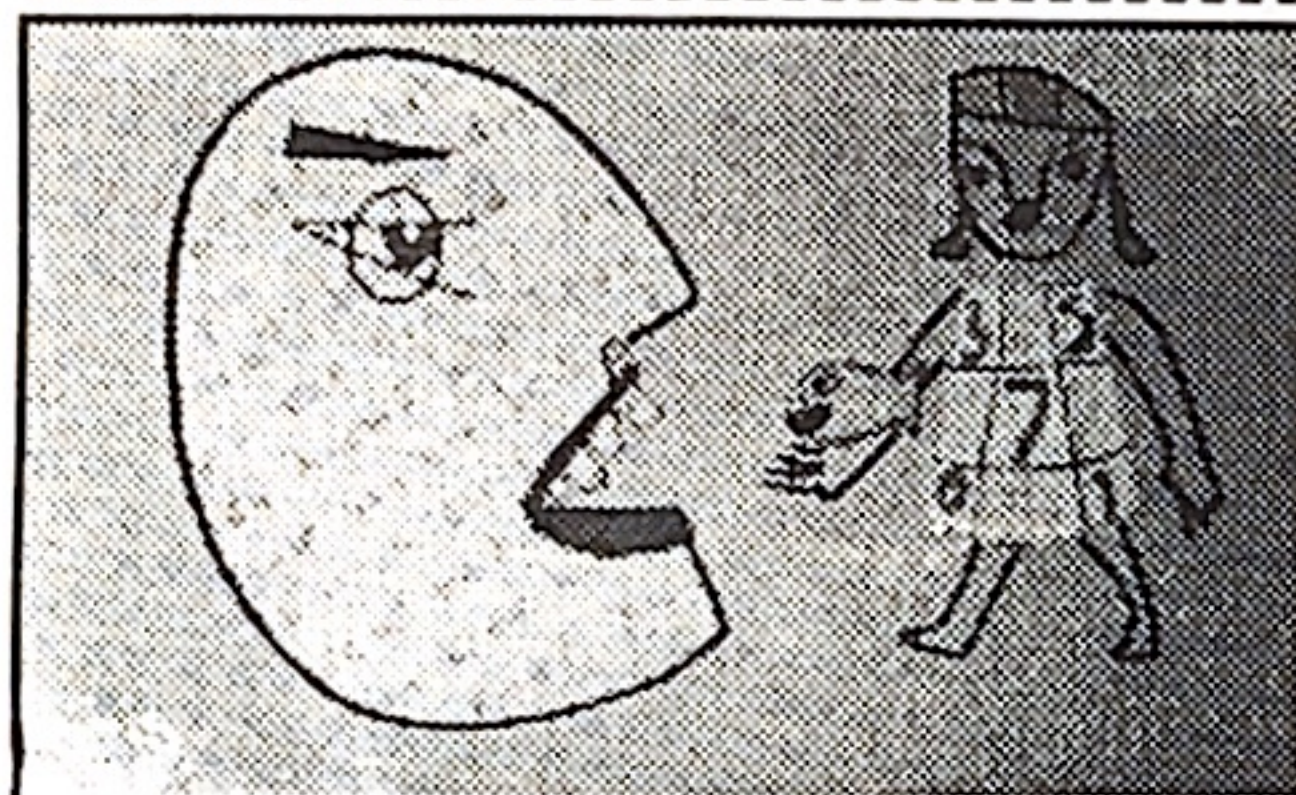
www.ytd.com/asifa



UPDATES

J.J. SEDELMAIER PRODUCTIONS, INC.

J.J. Sedelmaier Productions, Inc. is entering its 8th year in the industry. Some of the highlights of the past year have been: the focus of an article in the prestigious graphics arts journal Print Magazine, the focus of a segment for London's Channel 4 "Illuminations" (A new show on animation), a segment on Toronto's media TV television show, an article in the AIGA Journal by director J.J. Sedelmaier about translating print-work to animation, a New York Times advertising column regarding the studio's involvement in a commercial one for the Episcopal church, and a retrospective of the studio's work inaugurating the new projection video theatre at the cinemateque Quebecoise in Montreal. The studio has received numerous awards all over the world culminating in an Annie award nomination for "Titey" the studio's parody of a Disney type film for Saturday night Live. The studio continues its relationship with Saturday night live for a third season for Saturday TV Funhouse with Robert Smigel as the head writer. Other projects include a segment for Late Night with David Letterman, commercials for Northern tissue, Brown & Company, Computer City and Rothman's. Director J.J. Sedelmaier collaborated with artists such as: Douglas Frasier, Lenny Glasser, David Levine, and Bonnie Timmons. All of the work produced by the studio this year has either been return work or a single bid scenario.



Emily Hubley just returned from the North Hampton Film Festival, her film, "One Self: Fish/Girl" will be showing @ the NY Expo this month. "One Self: Fish/Girl" also won a special achievement award @ the USA Short Film Festival in Huston.

She recently worked with 2nd Generation Animation Co. as Director/Designer for a documentary entitled "Golden Threads" produced by Wildlight, funded by ITVF, and will air on PBS in 1999.

The James Howe Gallery @ Kean University in Union, NJ will be presenting: "In This Moment" New frames + work by Emily through December Reception scheduled for Dec. 1, Call Emily, (973) 763-6076 for info.

POLESTAR FILMS

Don Duga and Ira Verbitsky of Polestar Animation are currently working on a fifteen minute animated film for children "The Island of The Skog" to be released in the spring of 1999.

Duga and Verbitsky just finished a four minute spot for AT&T which is number one in a series.

"Goodnight Gorilla" an eight minute film for children was released this fall and is receiving good reviews.

News from Curious Pictures

Summer was off to a great start as Curious Pictures won the AICP MOMA Best Animation award for it's Reebok "Foot Soldiers" spot directed by Paul Berry. After adding several key hires to the CG staff, production started on "A Little Curious" the long-form preschool series for HBO's new Family Channel, due to launch in February. The series is being directed by Curious President Steve Oakes and includes the work of such animators/directors as Chel White (Portland, OR), Nick Hewitt, Steward Lee and Denis Morella (all of San Francisco). Curious has taken on several exciting commercial projects recently ... Curious' newest animation director, Jerry Van De Beek, just wrapped up a series of computer animation spots for toy maker Galoob. Nick Hewitt of Curious' San Francisco office designed & directed a collage-like animated spot for The Cartoon Network based on the Huckleberry Hound character. Steward Lee, another Curious San Francisco-based director, created a traditional cel-animated spot for the Colorado Lottery.

In New York, Mo Willems is directing an animated series called "Elmo's World" for Children's Television Workshop; and Curious Graphics director Joan Raspo created a high-tech, graphics-rich spot for Reebok DMX which began airing in October. Director Tuesday McGowan created a new reel opener for Curious entitled "Curious Girl on the Run" which was recognized as a Communication Arts Design

Debra Solomons Film, "Everybody's Pregnant" has been on the festival circuit and has picked up a few honors

- ASIFA Best Entry 1998
- 1998 World Animation Festival, Special Jury Award
- New Directors New Films Series, Museum of Modern Art
- Aspen Short Film Festival, Special Jury Award
- New Haven Film Festival, First Place Audience Award
- Sydney Film Festival, First Place Short Film Category
- BBC Film Short Film Festival, American Airlines Award Winner
- Palm Springs Film Festival, First Place Audience Award
- Short Film Festival of Drama, Greece Dionysos Special Jury Award
- Ottawa Animation Festival, Directors Choice
- I Castelli Animati Premio Speciale Della Giuria: Special Prize of the Jury

also won a Jerome foundation Emerging Artist Grant



Keep a lookout for a new seven minute cartoon written and directed by: **Tom Warburton** you can see it only on **CARTOON NETWORK**

Choosing an Animation Style Based on What's Right, Not on What's Possible

By: Mark Simon

Once a decision has been made to animate a project the choice between cel, computer graphics (CG), or a combination of the two needs to be determined. This may sound like a dubious dilemma, but it's very important when dealing with clients. Because of the proliferation and publicity of computer graphics in animation, many clients think that all animation is computer generated and that it's cheaper. They are wrong on both counts.

Cel animation is ideal for cartoons and character animation; while, computer animation is best suited for logos, realistic objects, product shots, special effects, and certain types of characters. CG and cel animation are also generally equivalent in budgets. This statement is echoed by Pixar's John Lassiter in the January 5, 1998 issue of The Hollywood Reporter.

There are certain types of projects that are best animated by hand and others that are suited to computer animation. Artistic problems crop up when a project is animated by computer simply because it's possible, not because it's right for the project.

One problem with computer animation is that character and motion are too confined by physics to work for most cartoons and I'm referring mostly to cartoons, described as "funny drawings that move funny" by Bob Clampett, not just any animation. Sure, squash & stretch can be applied to characters in CG, but it just won't have the same look as cel animation. Each drawing in a cel-animated sequence may look odd by itself, but when animated it can flow like magic. However, the problem with hand animation is that it's imprecise when animating intricate, hard-edged objects and detailed moving backgrounds and doesn't duplicate live action as well for effects. Could you imagine trying to animate the thousands of leaves on Grandmother Willow by hand?

Bugs Bunny could be animated in CG, but would it do justice to the character? Would it have as much personality? No. Bugs always has been and always should be cel animation. Would Toy Story have been as believable if it was animated by hand? Probably not. It was the perfect vehicle for CG because the characters were hard-surface objects that we all recognize as needing to look a certain way.

There are instances where cel and CG can be incorporated in the same project. Every day we see more instances where the combination worked better than either choice would have worked alone. Once the decision has been made to combine CG and cel, when to apply one or the other must be well thought out. Can you imagine seeing Spiderman swinging down a moving street in perspective if the buildings were animated by hand and Spidey was CG? Doesn't make much sense does it? But using a computer to animate the background in the ballroom scene of Beauty and the Beast, while the characters were cel animation, worked beautifully. The decision to animate it this way was based on what was right for the scene as a whole.

There have been times where the combination of cel and CG has failed. The recent Invasion America used a great deal of both cel and CG and they didn't work well together. Conceptually using CG for the spaceships and meteors and cel for the characters was the right decision. Where the combination went wrong was with the flow of motion. The cel animation has an anime look of being animated on 3's and the CG was animated with very smooth motion on 1's. The differences were disconcerting. To use CG with an anime style of cel animation, the CG should have been rendered on 3's to match. Another visual problem with that production was the use of CG explosions. The CG style of the explosions did not match the hand-drawn art at all and stood out in sharp contrast. Compare that with the hand-drawn explosions in the Batman and Superman series and you will see how the explosions blend perfectly with the rest of the animation.

It's up to all of us to educate our clients about animation and what might be best for their projects. Clients need to know that not all animation is produced by computers and that the decision to animate by hand or by computer should be based on what's right for the project—not on what's possible with the latest and greatest technology. The right decision will benefit the final project, as well as the business of animation in general.

Mark Simon
Director

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ASIFA November Screening: Between Background and Character

Presented by: Anne Bobroff-Hajal

November's ASIFA/East screening, will include the films of Pooh Kaye, Karen Aqua/Jeanee Redmond, and Jane Aaron, and videotapes of Kathy Rose performances. These animators create works of extraordinary visual imagination, using the human body, stop-motion animation, and wildly inventive integrations of character and background.

Much stop-motion animation is based on the cell-animation model of a flat background with an animated character moving in front of it. In borrowing the 2-dimensional drawn-cell model, stop-action sometimes does not take advantage of the 3-dimensional space between background and character. And the space between the two sometimes exhibits shadows and other "live-action" artifacts that are not controlled in the total visual look of the film.



Pooh Kaye painting one of her characters



Drawing from "The Painted Princess" by: Jon Imber

Pooh Kaye's films *Wake-Up Call* and *The Painted Princess* are extraordinarily beautiful and imaginative in many ways. One is that Kaye very actively uses the 3-dimensional space between her backgrounds and her characters (human beings filmed in stop-action animation). Paint moves down the background, across the space between walls and characters, across furniture, and over the human characters' costumes, hair, and faces. Trees and a series of arches through which the Painted Princess runs are as animated as the Princess herself. The Princess cries tears which stream down her dress, puddle at her feet, then create a sea complete with waves on the floor.

Jane Aaron's four short films, including "Traveling Light" and others, play endlessly with our usual stop-motion expectations of 3-dimensional characters against flat backgrounds. Aaron sometimes animates a 2-dimensional character against a 3-dimensional background, as when flat cactuses grow in a live-action desert.

In "Set in Motion", brightly colored, animated stripes vibrate and pulsate over walls, furniture, and even spiral around a dancing couple. In two other films, "Remains to be Seen" and "Interior Designs", slices of flat drawings bring life to deserted live action settings.

Karen Aqua and Jeanee Redmond's film, "Yours for the Taking", is about a 3-legged cup that goes on vacation, and comes back home deeply enriched by having absorbed new impressions from exotic lands.

This film is the closest (in this screening) to traditional cell animation: the character of the cup moves against a flat background (this is done through replacement animation, using 45 differently-positioned fired clay cups). But these animators play, sometimes subtly, with visual interactions between their background and their character that portray the cup's absorbing its vacation experiences. You'll reap a cheery reward if you pay careful attention to what happens to the animation on the cup, as it moves through the different background-environments of its vacation.



Still from, "Yours For The Taking"
By: Karen Aqua & Jeanee Redmond

Kathy Rose's work is completely unique. She scrambles utterly our perceptions of where foreground ends and background begins, by projecting carefully-synchronized animation onto live dancers. Animated "liquids" fill the dancers' tube dresses and slosh from one dancer's costume to the other's. A "fire" burns, created partly from rippling silk and partly through animation-projection. A many-armed spider draws her prey into her web. Are her arms animated or real? As one reviewer wrote, "I gave up trying to keep track of the various levels of reality and illusion, surrendering to the sheer beauty of the moment Rose had created." We will see videotaped excerpts of Rose's performances, along with a complete tape of her "She".

Kathy Rose and Pooh Kaye will discuss their creative process and methods following the screening.

OPPORTUNITIES

MO WILLEMS SEEKS INDEPENDENT ANIMATORS TO DO HIS DIRTY WORK FOR NEW FILM.

In the spirit of "Ani-Jam", animator Mo Willems is embarking on an independent film project tentatively entitled "LIFE". The film will feature a series of animals and creatures eating others and being eaten in turn (bug eaten by bird, bird by dog, dog by cat, cat by plant, plant by six armed googly thing, etc). It is Mo's hope to tap into the East Coast animation community and have individual animators complete one "eating" each. 10 field drawings of the first and last frame (eaten and eater respectfully) will be supplied by Mo, and the animator may dispose of his victim in anyway he/she wishes within the allotted time (2 to 10 seconds). The clean penciled animation will have to be delivered on Ingram bond paper within 2 months (ready for digital ink and paint). Animators must retain the 10 field within their section, and can use up to 10 levels of animation. There will, unfortunately, be no compensation for the animators involved, but Mo will see to the completion of the color and sound of the final film, credit each participant, and supply a 3/4" copy of the final. It's Mo's hope to gather a mixture of the Big Stars and littler ones of the independent community to join in the effort. If you are interested, please send a letter indicating how much time you would like to animate to "LIFE, c/o Mo Willems, Curious Pictures, 440 Lafayette St., 6th Floor, NYC 10003. If Mo is unfamiliar with your work please include a 1/2" sample (finished film, pencil test, anything). Selections and assignments will be given by the end of the year and animation should be completed by the end of February.

Mo Willems is the creator of Nickelodeon's "The Off-Beats"
and the "Suzie Kabloozie" series for Sesame Street.
He is usually not this lazy when it comes to making a film.

Seeking African-American animators
to work on African spiritual project
involving several music videos and animated storybooks.

Must have 3-D experience
For more information contact:

Zena Lilly Pearl
#(718) 448-2396

GOT AN EXTRA 50 BUCKS ?

Cooper Union Adult Education Forum will sponsor:

The Disney Legacy: Storytelling, Placemaking & the American Life

Friday, December 4, 1998 9:30am-5:00pm, Admission \$50

Cooper Union, 30 Cooper Square, #212 849-8380

Examines How Disney animators and theme park designers
have changed the way stories are told

& will debate the purpose of narrative

in the design of buildings, neighborhoods, and towns.



this November:

WW3 Illustrated #26
-Female Complaints

*gutsy comics about
women's health and
occupational hazards*

Who's complaining?
Isabella Bannerman
Samantha Berger
Fly
Jenny Gonzales
Sandy Jimenez
Sabrina Jones
Peter Kuper
Ursula O'Steen
Kevin Pyle
Lance Took

single copies send
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EVENTS

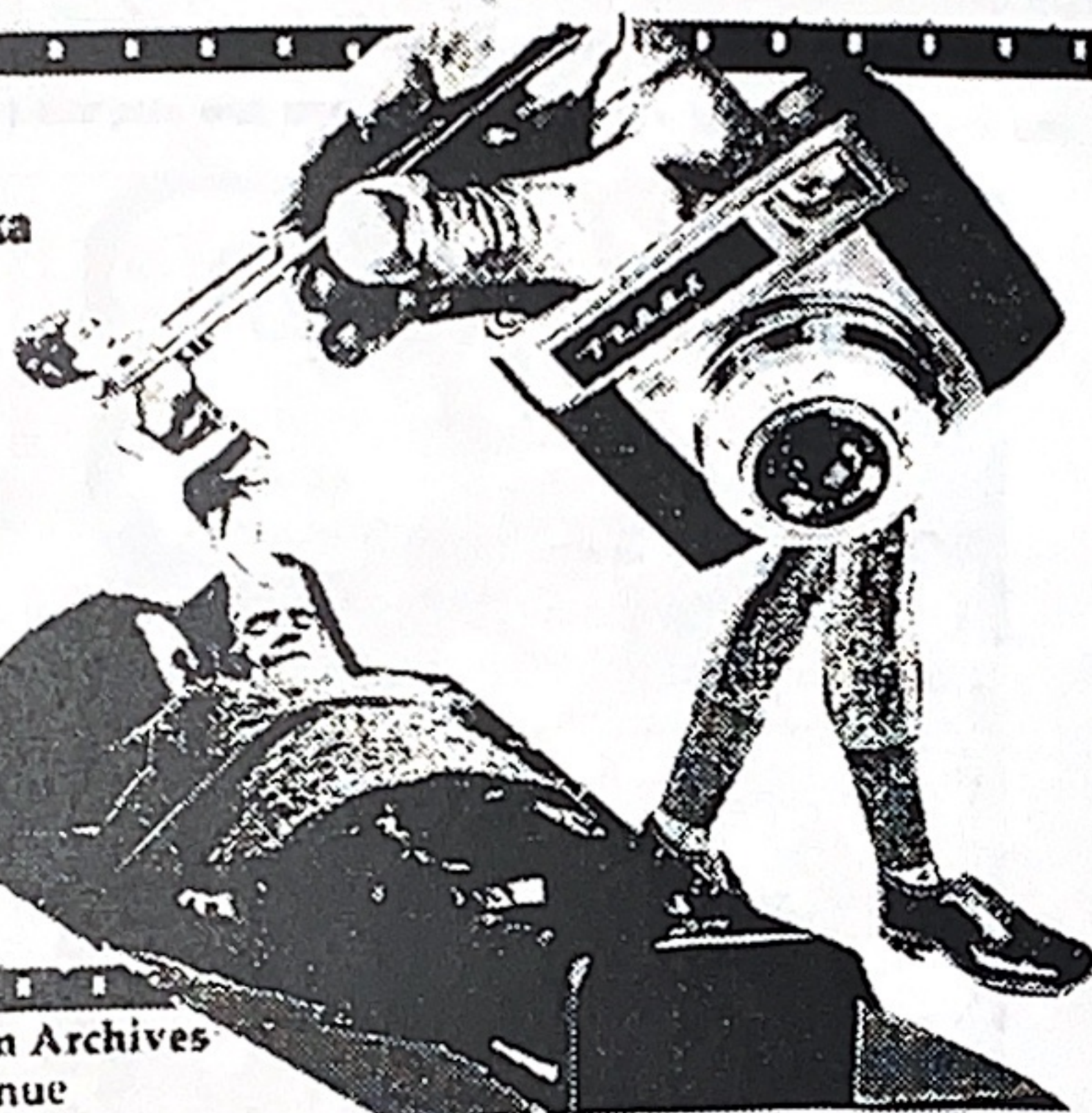
'After days and nights of incredible labor and fatigue. I became myself
apable of bestowing animation upon lifeless matter'

-Mary Shelly's Frankenstein

Frankenstein's DREAMS

films by...

- mara mattuschka
- martha colburn
- a.k. summers
- shawn atkins
- john schnall
- todd downing
- and others!



Anthology Film Archives
32 Second Avenue
2nd Avenue at 2nd Street
Friday, November 20, 1998 @ 8:00 pm

MIX

12TH NEWYORK LESBIAN&GAY EXPERIMENTAL FILM/VIDEO FESTIVAL

- *12 Films from USA, Austria, Australia, and Canada (73 min.)
- *Claymation, cutout, cel, stop-motion, & pixilation
- *populated by bald, butch lesbians, underwear police, disembodied penises, pornstar cosmonauts, & babies who do poppers

Show curated by: Shawn Atkins and Martha Colburn

In conjunction with this screening, Shawn and Martha are
teaching a one day animation workshop
at Manhattan Neighborhood Network,

Admission is free, but enrollment is limited to 15 people
Fer mo' info contact Mix Festival office, #(212)571-4242

EVENTS

32nd New York Exposition of Short Film and Video
The New School, Tishman Auditorium

66 West 12th Street

Dec.2-Dec.6, 1998

Tickets: \$6

For more information contact #(212) 229-5488



On December 2nd (opening night) 7-10pm

Among a quartet of films, the NY Expo will be presenting
a Russian animation entitled: "The Grey-Bearrdded Lion" by: Andrei Khrjanovski,
(A poignant and exquisitely drawn tale of the last days in the life of a traveling circus
and its aging star, a lion named Theo, who dreams of better days.)

On Thursday December 3rd from 8-10:45 PM

The Animation Program is a must see

17 recent animations from the U.S., Canada, Russia, & Germany

1. UNDER THE WEATHER by: Tali
2. CALL ME FISHMAEL by: Steven Dovas
3. FIGURE DRAWING by: Ward Jenkins
4. LILY AND JIM, by: Don Hertzfeldt
5. SCIENCE FACT: THE MAYFLY HAS A LIFESPAN OF 2 HOURS and
6. SCIENCE FACT: FISH HAVE NO MEMORY by: M. Adams, T. Minhoff, G. Pair
7. THE ROOM, by: Claire Ellenwood
8. THE FETISHIST, by: Jim Trainor
9. DUEL, by: Pavel Koutksy
10. BABUSHKA, by: Andrey Zolotuhin
11. EVERYBODY'S PREGNANT, by: Debra Soloman
12. ONE SELF: FISH GIRL, by: Emily Hubley
13. TOUNGE TWISTER, by: Sean Scott
14. HAIRYMAN, by: Steven Subotnick
15. SURVIVORS, by: Sheila Sofian
16. PANTHER, by: Vuk Jevremovic
17. GERI'S GAME, by: Jan Pinkava/Pixar

Lead from yer Ed.

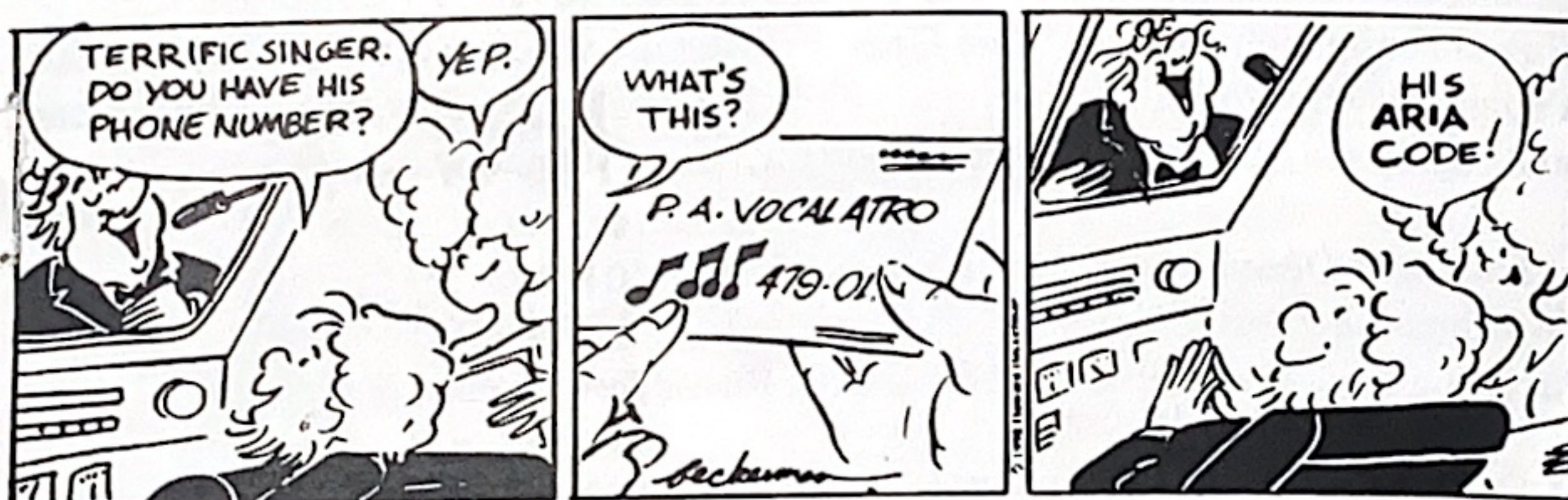
Before going into winter hibernation
contribute to the next ASIFA issue
feel free to include ifs ands or butts
just tell us like it is
deadline for December submissions:
November 29th 1998

Contact:
Maria Scavullo
email: Dolly4Us@aol.com
phone: (212) 280-1744

ANNY MATOR

By: Howard Beckerman

.....to be continued.....



Drawing Workshops

209 East 23rd Street
room # 607

Wednesday nights from 7-10p.m.

any questions contact Toni Tysen at:
#(212)722-0069

FREE to ASIFA members & students

FESTIVALS

Black Maria Film & Video Festival

Deadline: Nov. 17, 1998

Contact: Black Maria Festival
Dept. Of Media Arts
New Jersey University
203 West Side Ave.
Jersey City, NJ 07305

Dallas Video Festival

Deadline: Nov. 5, 1998

call: (214) 999-8999
email: bart@onramp.net
website: www.videofest.org

New England Film & Video Festival

Deadline: Nov. 28, 1998

call: (617) 536-1540
email: bfvf@aol.com

Aspen Shortsfest

Deadline: Dec. 1, 1998

Phone(970)925-6882
email: shortsfest@aspenfilm.org
website: www.aspenfilm.org

Montreal International Short Film Fest.

Deadline: Dec. 6, 1998

call: (514) 285-4515
fax: (514) 285-2886

South by Southwest

Film & Video Competition

Deadline: Dec. 14, 1998

call: (512) 467-7979
email: sxsw@sxsw.com
website: www.sxsw.com

enter

(don't be a wuss)

Black Filmworks

Festival of Film & Video

Deadline: Dec. 19, 1998

call: (213) 937-9155
website: www.laiff.com

Comedy Arts Festival

Aspen Colorado

Deadline: Dec. 30, 1998

call (213) 463-6646 x2203
website: WWW.uscaf.com

The 6th Annual

NY Underground Film Festival

Deadline: Jan. 1, 1999

call: (212)252-evil.....for entry forms
email: FESTIVAL@NYUFF.COM
website: WWW.NYUFF.COM

Atlanta Film & Video Festival

Deadline: Jan. 10, 1999

call: (404) 352-4254

New York Lesbian & Gay Film Festival

Deadline: Feb. 8, 1999

call: (212) 254-7228
email: newfest@idt.net
website: www.newfestival.org

Athens International Film & Video Fest.

Deadline: Feb. 15, 1999

call: (740) 593-1330
bradley@oak.cats.ohiou.edu
website: www.viscom.ohiou.edu

Ann Arbor Film Festival

Deadline: Feb. 15, 1999

call: (313) 995-5356
email: vicki@honeyman.org
website:

www.citi.umichedu/u/honey/aaff.

ASIFA EAST
c/o Michael Sporn Animation
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4th floor, NYC 10003



11238/2302

